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County Employment and Wages in Illinois — Fourth Quarter 2017

Ten of Illinois' 13 large counties reported employment increases from December 2016 to December 2017, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported today. (Large counties are defined as those with employment of 75,000 or more as measured by 2016 annual average employment.) Assistant Commissioner for Regional Operations Charlene Peiffer noted that Madison County had the largest percentage increase in employment at 1.8 percent, followed by Will (1.7 percent) and McHenry (1.4 percent). Three counties had over-the-year percentage decreases in employment, all by less than 1.0 percent. (See [table 1](#).)

Nationally, employment advanced 1.5 percent from December 2016 to December 2017 with 316 of the 346 largest U.S. counties registering increases. Midland, Texas, had the largest percentage increase in the country, up 11.5 percent over the year. Shawnee, Kan., and Caddo, La., had the largest over-the-year percentage decreases in employment among the largest counties in the U.S., with losses of 1.8 percent each.

Among the 13 largest counties in Illinois, employment was highest in Cook County (2,604,200) in December 2017. Two other large counties, DuPage (622,300) and Lake (338,100), had employment levels of more than 300,000. Collectively, Illinois' 13 large counties accounted for 80.9 percent of the state's employment with Cook County alone accounting for 43.4 percent. Nationwide, the 346 largest counties made up 73.0 percent of total U.S. employment.

Average weekly wages in Kane County increased 4.4 percent from the fourth quarter of 2016 to the fourth quarter of 2017, followed by McHenry County's 3.9-percent wage gain. (See [table 1](#).) Lake County had the highest average weekly wage in the state at \$1,411, followed by Cook (\$1,283) and Du Page (\$1,239). Nationally, the average weekly wage rose 3.9 percent over the year, increasing to \$1,109 in the fourth quarter of 2017.

Employment and wage levels (but not over-the-year changes) are also available for the 89 counties in Illinois with employment levels below 75,000. Eighty-eight of these smaller counties had average weekly wages below the national average. (See [table 2](#).)

Large county wage changes

Average weekly wages in 12 of the 13 large counties in Illinois increased from the fourth quarter of 2016 to the fourth quarter of 2017. Kane County's 4.4-percent increase in average weekly wages was the largest among the state's large counties and ranked 61st nationwide. McHenry (3.9 percent, 92nd) and Sangamon (3.3 percent, 141st) had over-the-year wage increases that ranked in the top-half nationwide. (See [table 1](#).)

Among the 346 largest U.S. counties, 339 had over-the-year increases in average weekly wages in the fourth quarter of 2017. San Mateo, Calif., and Ada, Idaho, had the largest percentage increases in average weekly wages among the largest U.S. counties (11.5 percent each). Seven of the 346 largest counties experienced over-the-year decreases in average weekly wages. Clayton, Ga., had the largest percentage decrease in average weekly wages with a decline of 6.7 percent.

Large county average weekly wages

Average weekly wages in 6 of Illinois' 13 large counties were above \$1,000 in the fourth quarter of 2017, with wages in three counties above the \$1,109 national average. Lake (\$1,411, 19th) and Cook (\$1,283, 43rd) placed in the top 50 nationwide and DuPage ranked 54th at \$1,239. St. Clair (\$856) reported the lowest average weekly wage among the state's large counties and ranked 306th nationwide.

Nationally, weekly wages were higher than the U.S. average of \$1,109 in 95 of the 346 largest counties. Santa Clara, Calif., held the top position with an average weekly wage of \$2,576, followed by New York, N.Y. (\$2,439), and San Mateo, Calif. (\$2,341). Among the largest U.S. counties, more than two-thirds (251) reported average weekly wages below the national average in the fourth quarter of 2017. The lowest weekly wages were in the Texas counties of Cameron (\$652) and Hidalgo (\$664), followed by Horry, S.C. (\$674).

Average weekly wages in Illinois' smaller counties

Eighty-eight of the 89 counties in Illinois with employment below 75,000 had average weekly wages lower than the national average of \$1,109. The exception was Rock Island (\$1,287). Calhoun County reported the lowest weekly wage in the state, averaging \$513 in the fourth quarter of 2017. (See [table 2.](#))

When all 102 counties in Illinois were considered, all but 4 had wages below the national average of \$1,109. Twenty-two counties reported average weekly wages less than \$700, 37 reported wages from \$700 to \$799, 23 had wages from \$800 to \$899, and 20 had wages of \$900 or higher. (See [chart 1.](#))

Additional statistics and other information

QCEW data for states have been included in this release in [table 3](#). For additional information about quarterly employment and wages data, please read the [Technical Note](#) or visit www.bls.gov/cew.

Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online features comprehensive information by detailed industry on establishments, employment, and wages for the nation and all states. The 2016 edition of this publication contains selected data produced by Business Employment Dynamics (BED) on job gains and losses, as well as selected data from the first quarter 2017 version of the national news release. Tables and additional content from *Employment and Wages Annual Averages 2016* are now available online at <https://www.bls.gov/cew/cewbultn16.htm>. The 2017 edition of *Employment and Wages Annual Averages Online* will be available in September 2018.

The County Employment and Wages news release for first quarter 2018 is scheduled to be released on Wednesday, August 22, 2018.

QCEW Publication Acceleration and Conversion to Two Data Releases

The national QCEW publication process has accelerated for a more timely release. Beginning with the national fourth quarter 2017 release, QCEW data are now published in two parts. The current County Employment and Wages news release and associated data have been accelerated and published first. The full QCEW data release, with smaller county data contained in this release, occurs two weeks later.

Technical Note

Average weekly wage data by county are compiled under the Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages (QCEW) program, also known as the ES-202 program. The data are derived from summaries of employment and total pay of workers covered by state and federal unemployment insurance (UI) legislation and provided by State Workforce Agencies (SWAs). The 10.0 million employer reports cover 145.9 million full- and part-time workers. The average weekly wage values are calculated by dividing quarterly total wages by the average of the three monthly employment levels of those covered by UI programs. The result is then divided by 13, the number of weeks in a quarter. It is to be noted, therefore, that over-the-year wage changes for geographic areas may reflect shifts in the composition of employment by industry, occupation, and such other factors as hours of work. Thus, wages may vary among counties, metropolitan areas, or states for reasons other than changes in the average wage level.

QCEW data are not designed as a time series. QCEW data are simply the sums of individual establishment records reflecting the number of establishments that exist in a county or industry at a point in time. Establishments can move in or out of a county or industry for a number of reasons—some reflecting economic events, others reflecting administrative changes.

The preliminary QCEW data presented in this release may differ from data released by the individual states as well as from the data presented on the BLS Web site. These potential differences result from the states' continuing receipt, review and editing of UI data over time. On the other hand, differences between data in this release and the data found on the BLS Web site are the result of adjustments made to improve over-the-year comparisons. Specifically, these adjustments account for administrative (noneconomic) changes such as a correction to a previously reported location or industry classification. Adjusting for these administrative changes allows users to more accurately assess changes of an economic nature (such as a firm moving from one county to another or changing its primary economic activity) over a 12-month period. Currently, adjusted data are available only from BLS press releases.

Information in this release will be made available to sensory impaired individuals upon request. Voice phone: (202) 691-5200; Federal Relay Service: (800) 877-8339.

Table 1. Covered employment and wages in the United States and the 13 largest counties in Illinois, fourth quarter 2017

Area	Employment			Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2017 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2016-17 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level ⁽³⁾	Percent change, fourth quarter 2016-17 ⁽²⁾	National ranking by percent change ⁽³⁾
United States ⁽⁴⁾	145,921.1	1.5	--	\$1,109	--	3.9	--
Illinois	6,001.1	0.8	--	1,151	9	2.6	40
Champaign, Ill.	90.9	1.0	196	933	232	-1.6	345
Cook, Ill.	2,604.2	0.6	255	1,283	43	2.6	213
DuPage, Ill.	622.3	0.4	281	1,239	54	2.4	241
Kane, Ill.	211.2	0.1	309	1,005	171	4.4	61
Lake, Ill.	338.1	1.2	167	1,411	19	1.0	317
Madison, Ill.	101.7	1.8	102	857	305	2.0	270
McHenry, Ill.	98.6	1.4	144	917	249	3.9	92
McLean, Ill.	83.3	-0.9	336	944	224	2.3	249
Peoria, Ill.	104.2	0.9	215	1,088	105	1.6	300
Sangamon, Ill.	129.4	-0.3	326	1,065	122	3.3	141
St. Clair, Ill.	94.8	-0.4	328	856	306	2.4	241
Will, Ill.	245.6	1.7	111	954	215	2.1	264
Winnebago, Ill.	128.1	0.1	309	904	265	2.8	188

Footnotes:

(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Percent changes were computed from quarterly employment and pay data adjusted for noneconomic county reclassifications.

(3) Ranking does not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

(4) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Illinois, fourth quarter 2017

Area	Employment December 2017	Average weekly wage(1)
United States(2)	145,921,109	\$1,109
Illinois	6,001,103	1,151
Adams	33,408	827
Alexander	1,172	717
Bond	4,822	756
Boone	18,468	1,002
Brown	4,150	856
Bureau	11,431	798
Calhoun	766	513
Carroll	3,783	708
Cass	5,405	729
Champaign	90,881	933
Christian	10,169	722
Clark	4,613	733
Clay	5,402	721
Clinton	12,404	768
Coles	24,665	720
Cook	2,604,224	1,283
Crawford	6,943	940
Cumberland	2,813	676
De Kalb	38,498	843
De Witt	5,043	954
Douglas	7,575	748
DuPage	622,334	1,239
Edgar	7,227	780
Edwards	2,311	735
Effingham	22,169	768
Fayette	5,287	668
Ford	4,447	781
Franklin	8,484	670
Fulton	8,346	669
Gallatin	1,270	865
Greene	2,301	608
Grundy	19,391	1,054
Hamilton	2,066	865
Hancock	4,000	690
Hardin	707	588
Henderson	1,059	590
Henry	13,612	757
Iroquois	8,028	669
Jackson	24,114	768
Jasper	1,925	755
Jefferson	20,057	819
Jersey	4,862	673
Jo Daviess	7,303	704
Johnson	2,221	860
Kane	211,228	1,005
Kankakee	44,583	812
Kendall	28,641	790
Knox	18,006	684
La Salle	43,179	869
Lake	338,121	1,411
Lawrence	4,522	808
Lee	13,235	862
Livingston	14,006	891
Logan	9,256	783
Macon	49,518	952

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Table 2. Covered employment and wages in the United States and all counties in Illinois, fourth quarter 2017 - Continued

Area	Employment December 2017	Average weekly wage(1)
Macoupin	10,427	726
Madison	101,728	857
Marion	12,979	739
Marshall	2,899	720
Mason	3,099	698
Massac	2,573	846
McDonough	11,085	736
McHenry	98,588	917
McLean	83,257	944
Menard	1,768	651
Mercer	3,068	645
Monroe	8,669	728
Montgomery	8,748	749
Morgan	14,032	761
Moultrie	4,923	781
Ogle	15,505	869
Peoria	104,194	1,088
Perry	4,760	759
Piatt	3,566	704
Pike	4,011	696
Pope	649	571
Pulaski	1,858	944
Putnam	1,711	1,022
Randolph	12,205	813
Richland	6,068	700
Rock Island	73,204	1,287
Saline	7,780	718
Sangamon	129,420	1,065
Schuyler	1,521	809
Scott	1,032	697
Shelby	4,844	621
St. Clair	94,844	856
Stark	1,286	800
Stephenson	17,691	844
Tazewell	49,193	889
Union	4,892	710
Vermilion	27,102	845
Wabash	3,311	721
Warren	6,592	684
Washington	6,602	911
Wayne	3,716	659
White	4,264	698
Whiteside	20,823	732
Will	245,640	954
Williamson	28,720	780
Winnebago	128,138	904
Woodford	10,224	834

Footnotes

(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

NOTE: Includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs. Data are preliminary.

Table 3. Covered employment and wages by state, fourth quarter 2017

State	Employment		Average weekly wage ⁽¹⁾			
	December 2017 (thousands)	Percent change, December 2016-17	Average weekly wage	National ranking by level	Percent change, fourth quarter 2016-17	National ranking by percent change
United States ⁽²⁾	145,921.1	1.5	\$1,109	--	3.9	--
Alabama	1,955.3	1.1	928	36	2.9	32
Alaska	306.7	-1.2	1,052	19	1.5	51
Arizona	2,834.7	2.6	978	25	3.5	12
Arkansas	1,217.2	1.0	848	48	2.5	42
California	17,293.0	2.1	1,346	4	5.7	4
Colorado	2,653.3	2.5	1,133	10	4.3	9
Connecticut	1,689.7	0.3	1,317	5	2.2	46
Delaware	444.9	0.6	1,081	15	2.6	40
District of Columbia	769.0	0.9	1,812	1	2.7	37
Florida	8,712.0	2.0	975	26	3.4	16
Georgia.....	4,425.0	1.8	1,027	20	3.4	16
Hawaii.....	664.5	0.8	984	24	3.1	26
Idaho	712.4	3.0	857	46	7.1	1
Illinois	6,001.1	0.8	1,151	9	2.6	40
Indiana.....	3,057.8	1.1	915	38	3.6	11
Iowa	1,549.7	0.4	938	32	3.0	28
Kansas	1,390.3	0.4	894	41	1.9	49
Kentucky.....	1,903.8	0.5	892	42	2.1	47
Louisiana	1,918.8	0.4	933	35	2.1	47
Maine.....	610.3	1.2	884	43	3.4	16
Maryland.....	2,683.6	0.5	1,207	8	3.3	22
Massachusetts	3,582.2	1.3	1,411	3	4.4	8
Michigan	4,321.8	0.9	1,062	17	3.4	16
Minnesota.....	2,875.7	1.3	1,100	14	3.4	16
Mississippi.....	1,140.6	0.5	774	51	2.4	45
Missouri	2,809.5	1.0	945	31	2.9	32
Montana	461.4	1.0	843	50	2.7	37
Nebraska	980.9	0.9	901	39	3.0	28
Nevada	1,351.9	3.5	955	29	3.2	25
New Hampshire.....	661.3	0.7	1,132	11	3.7	10
New Jersey.....	4,106.9	1.6	1,262	6	1.8	50
New Mexico.....	816.7	0.6	865	45	2.5	42
New York	9,465.3	1.4	1,428	2	6.4	2
North Carolina	4,388.6	1.5	964	28	3.3	22
North Dakota	416.1	0.4	1,010	22	3.3	22
Ohio	5,409.2	0.8	973	27	3.1	26
Oklahoma	1,607.8	1.2	895	40	3.5	12
Oregon	1,900.4	2.0	1,014	21	4.5	7
Pennsylvania.....	5,870.4	1.2	1,075	16	3.5	12
Rhode Island	483.6	1.1	1,056	18	2.7	37
South Carolina.....	2,058.8	1.6	879	44	2.8	35
South Dakota.....	423.8	0.9	856	47	3.4	16
Tennessee.....	2,984.8	1.3	1,000	23	3.0	28
Texas	12,207.8	2.0	1,109	13	3.5	12
Utah	1,465.5	3.6	936	33	2.9	32
Vermont.....	314.7	0.5	919	37	2.5	42
Virginia.....	3,884.2	1.3	1,121	12	2.8	35
Washington.....	3,305.0	2.4	1,217	7	5.8	3
West Virginia	693.1	0.1	847	49	4.7	5
Wisconsin.....	2,872.6	1.0	951	30	3.0	28
Wyoming	267.5	0.6	935	34	4.6	6
Puerto Rico.....	887.0	-4.4	570	(3)	2.5	(3)
Virgin Islands.....	34.3	-11.1	827	(3)	7.7	(3)

Note: See footnotes at end of table.

Footnotes:

(1) Average weekly wages were calculated using unrounded data.

(2) Totals for the United States do not include data for Puerto Rico or the Virgin Islands.

(3) Data not included in the national ranking.

Note: Data are preliminary. Covered employment and wages includes workers covered by Unemployment Insurance (UI) and Unemployment Compensation for Federal Employees (UCFE) programs.

Chart 1. Average weekly wages by county in Illinois, fourth quarter 2017

